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A GENERAL

VIEW OF THE BILL

PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT

DURING THE LAST SESSION,

FOR PREVENTING

THE ILLICIT EXPORTATION

OF

Britiſh Wool and Live Sheep.

IN WHICH ARE EXHIBITED,

The Origin of the Enquiry;
Remarks on the Inefficacy of the preſent Laws to prevent the Exportation of Wool;
The Principle on which the Bill is founded;
Curſory Obſervations on the Nature of the Evidence which will be produced to the Houſe of Commons.
General Obſervations on what has been advanced by different Writers, on the Expediency of permitting the Exportation of Britiſh Wool;

AND

Remarks on the Conduct of ſome Perſons who have publicly attacked the Bill.

WITH MISCELLANEOUS

Reflections on the Woollen Manufacture,

As connected with the Preſent Enquiry.

ADDRESSED TO THE MOST NOBLE

THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWN,

BY THE

CHAIRMAN of the GENERAL MEETINGS.

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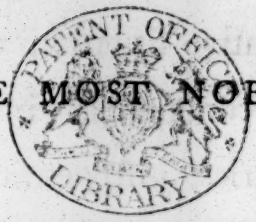
TO

THE MOST NOBLE



The MARQUIS of LANSDOWN.

My Lord,

YOUR Lordſhip having frequently condeſcended to converſe with me on the ſubject of the Woollen Manufacture, I am deſirous of introducing the diſcuſſion of a queſtion of conſiderable importance, and which is intimately connected with it, to the notice of the public, under your Lordſhip's patronage.

The extenſive knowledge which your Lordſhip poſſeſſes, both of the actual ſtate of the Trade and Commerce of this Kingdom, and

alſo of its relative ſituation with reſpect to our general commercial intercourſe with foreign countries, juſtly entitles you to general reſpect; and to no perſon can I addreſs myſelf on ſuch a ſubject with more ſatisfaction than to your Lordſhip.

The Woollen Manufacturers, being now perfectly united in ſentiment reſpecting the increaſing practice of ſmuggling Britiſh Wool to France, and the inefficacy of the preſent laws to prevent it, are determined to bring forward this ſeſſion of Parliament the Bill which was preſented laſt year, with ſuch alterations and amendments as have been propoſed ſince the receſs.

The various miſrepreſentations which have been held out to the public, of the real deſign

ſign of the manufacturers, and which have been induſtriouſly propagated and invidiouſly commented on by a *noble Author* in his ſpeech at a County Meeting, and by writers of inferior rank in periodical publications, have induced me occaſionally to notice their unjuſt charges through the channel of the publick prints, and to challenge them to a proof of their aſſertions; but as it is extremely diſagreeable to anſwer ſimilar objections, continually brought forward by different perſons, I intend this addreſs to your Lordſhip as a kind of general anſwer; and I have the more readily undertaken this mode of reply, as it affords me an opportunity of conſidering the queſtion in a more diffuſe manner than can poſſibly be effected in the compaſs of a letter deſigned for inſertion in a newſpaper.

Through the whole of this arduous undertaking, I have been uniformly guided by facts, without being biaſſed either by party, or by perſonal intereſt; and the ſame line of conduct will, I truſt, mark all my future proceedings; as a ſtrict adherence to truth, without regarding the partial reaſonings of any ſet of men whatever, can alone ſatisfy my own mind, or afford me the leaſt proſpect of being in this inſtance ſerviceable to my country. To your Lordſhip's, and to the publick candour, therefore, I moſt willingly ſubmit the following obſervations on the Wool Bill.

Before I proceed directly to the conſideration of my ſubject, I beg leave to ſtate the origin of the enquiry, and its progreſs to the preſent time; the conduct of the manufacturers

turers having, in this inſtance, as well as others, been much miſrepreſented.

In the year 1784, ſome perſons in the Woollen Trade, in Somerſetſhire, being alarmed by the accounts which they had received of the ſmuggling of wool in that part of the country, requeſted by publick advertiſement a meeting of the manufacturers and wool-dealers at Briſtol fair. In conſequence of this requeſt, a very numerous and reſpectable meeting was held, at which I attended, without the moſt diſtant idea of taking an active part in the buſineſs; but that meeting having been pleaſed unanimouſly to call me to the chair, I could not conſiſtently with propriety decline it.

The informations received at this meeting, reſpecting the ſmuggling of wool and live ſheep, were deemed amply ſufficient to warrant a further inquiry; and the reſolutions entered into for that purpoſe were made publick.

Soon after the manufacturers of the Weſt had met at Briſtol, a ſimilar meeting was held at Leeds in Yorkſhire. The reſolutions of this and other ſubſequent meetings in thoſe parts were tranſmitted to me, as alſo ſome information on the ſubject; and a mutual correſpondence for facilitating the operations of the manufacturers in general, ſoon after took place.

Some conſiderable ſeizures of wool having been made in the river Thames, and in Dorſetſhire,

ſetſhire, and freſh diſcoveries in the ſmuggling of wool being continually produced, the manufacturers were ſtimulated to act with firmneſs and vigour; and a very liberal ſubſcription was entered into for defraying the neceſſary expences.

At a meeting held at Bath, a memorial was drawn up, and preſented to the Lords of the Treaſury, praying that the laws for ſuppreſſing the ſmuggling of wool might be more vigorouſly executed; and it was likewiſe reſolved, ſhould it appear neceſſary, to apply to Parliament for more ample proviſions to reſtrain the fraudulent exportation of this valuable article.

Perſonal application was made to his Majeſty's miniſters on the ſubject, and the ſtrongeſt

ſtrongeſt aſſurances were received of the ſupport of Government; but the important diſcuſſion of the Iriſh propoſitions ſo much engaged the attention of Parliament, that it was judged moſt adviſeable to drop all further application at this time. In the mean while I employed myſelf in a ſtrict inveſtigation of the ſubject, and drew up obſervations on the preſent laws, and a rough ſketch of a plan for new regulations: but ſo many difficulties preſented themſelves to my view, that I felt myſelf inclined to drop the proſecution of the ſcheme.

The manufacturers, when again aſſembled, were however determined to perſevere in the proſecution of the object for which they had united; and, as I very ardently wiſhed to bring the matter to ſome iſſue, I delivered my

my papers, by the direction of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, into the hands of Mr. *Roſe*; and the Solicitor to the Cuſtoms received orders to peruſe them, and to prepare the draft of a bill for the inſpection of Miniſtry.

Copies of theſe papers I had previouſly tranſmitted to the meeting at Leeds. At that time the draft of another bill for ſuppreſſing the ſmuggling of wool, drawn up by a cuſtom-houſe officer, was ſent for my peruſal, and a copy of the ſame was conveyed to the manufacturers in the North. This bill being the work of a perſon unacquainted with the nature of the woollen manufacture, contained many objectionable clauſes; and a groundleſs opinion prevailing in the North, that it had received the ſanction of Government, and probably ſome other clauſes concur-

concurring, an unexpected and violent oppoſition aroſe in that quarter, and a memorial was preſented to the Lords of the Treaſury, praying that no alteration whatever might be made in the ſubſiſting laws reſpecting the exportation of wool.

This unexpected event not a little endangered the ſucceſs of our meaſures; for it was ſignified to me, that Government could not bring forward any propoſition, while the manufacturers were ſo much divided among themſelves.

But this defection of the Northern manufacturers was in ſome meaſure compenſated by an acceſſion of ſtrength from other quarters. The merchants and manufacturers of Exeter, experiencing a want of wool, held a meeting

a meeting in that city, and came to reſolutions ſomewhat ſimilar to thoſe which had been originally entered into at Briſtol; and almoſt at the ſame inſtant, the wool-dealers in the county of Kent, perceiving that the ſmuggling of wool in that county had conſiderably increaſed, aſſembled at Canterbury, and offered to ſend delegates to a general meeting of the manufacturers to be held in London. Such a meeting was alſo propoſed by the gentlemen of Exeter; and having received the ſanction of the manufacturers aſſembled at Saliſbury, an advertiſement, announcing it, was publiſhed in the papers; in conſequence of which, *delegates from eighteen counties* (which, excluſive of Yorkſhire, included the manufacturing intereſt of nearly the whole kingdom) met at the Crown and Anchor tavern in the Strand. Here again I

was

was nominated to the chair. The meeting was ſo very reſpectable, that Government thought proper to give their *approbation* and *concurrence*, and a conſiderable number of the members of the Houſe of Commons honoured the meetings by their attendance; and being perfectly ſatisfied with the evidence produced, came to ſeveral reſolutions in ſupport of the meaſures of the manufacturers.

A Committee being formed, and the heads of the propoſed bill being drawn up, we ſolicited an examination before the Houſe of Commons. Leave was obtained for a committee of that Houſe to receive evidence; which being by them deemed ſatisfactory, a report was grounded on the ſame, and the bill was ordered to be printed; but the ſeſſion was ſo far advanced, that nothing further could

could be done in the buſineſs. At this time a part of the manufacturers in the North expreſſed their deſire of joining in an application to Parliament; and two perſons of conſequence, from that diſtrict of Yorkſhire which had appeared the moſt inimical to our deſigns, attended our committee at the Crown and Anchor ſome days before it broke up, and expreſſed themſelves perfectly ſatisfied with the impartiality of our proceedings: we had therefore ſome reaſon to hope for a reunion; but from many circumſtances which had occurred ſince the adjournment of the General Meeting in London, I muſt confeſs I placed but little dependance on ſo deſirable an event.

The opponents of the bill have exerted themſelves to the utmoſt, not only in miſrepreſenting

preſenting the clauſes which it contains, but in propagating ſuch inſinuations as were moſt likely to widen the breach that had unhappily taken place. But all their efforts proved abortive, as appears from the proceedings of a general meeting of the Nobility, Land-owners, Wool-growers, Manufacturers, &c. lately held at Bradford in that county, for the purpoſe of taking the propoſed bill into conſideration; who have reſolved to ſupport an application to Parliament jointly with the manufacturers of the Weſt, and have deputed three gentlemen to attend the next meeting which may be held in London. Thus, my Lord, after all the conflicts we have ſuſtained from internal diſſentions, and the avowed efforts of the opponents of the bill, the bond of union is likely to be drawn cloſer than ever; and all thoſe manu-

facturers,

facturers, who are more immediately intereſted in the ſucceſs of the bill, will with one voice preſent their requeſts to the legiſlature.

Though I rejoice at this union, yet it is not becauſe I view it in the light of an oppoſition to the landed intereſt. No, my Lord; I am fully convinced, that both intereſts are in this kingdom inſeparably united, and that it is madneſs to expect they can ever be ſeparated without mutual diſadvantage.

The reſolutions of the meeting at Bradford give the higheſt ſanction to the proceedings of the general meeting in London; ſince nothing but the force of evidence could have operated to produce ſuch a change of ſentiment, in a part of the country which had before profeſſed itſelf ſo inimical to our meaſures.

Having

Having thus given a conciſe view of the origin and progreſs of the inquiry concerning the ſmuggling of Engliſh wool, down to the preſent time, I will now proceed to offer ſome arguments for the propriety of an application to Parliament.

The queſtion naturally divides itſelf into two branches.

The firſt is,

Whether the practice of ſmuggling wool is carried on to any conſiderable extent?

The ſecond,

Whether the laws now in force are ſufficient to prevent that pernicious practice?

Theſe two points I ſhall conſider diſtinctly.

The

The evidence delivered to the Committee of the Houſe of Commons, was deemed amply ſufficient on which to ground a report, though a part only of what might have been given was then produced.

I am, however, now in poſſeſſion of much more ample information; the force of which no art or ſophiſtry can evade.

The liberal ſubſcription which was entered into immediately on the formation of the general meeting in London, has enabled me to employ perſons capable of procuring intelligence; and I have ſpared no pains or expence in order to furniſh myſelf with ſuch materials as, from their ſolidity, I doubt not, are capable of combating all oppoſition to this propoſition—that Britiſh wool is ſmuggled in great quantities.

The information which, by the concurrence of ſingular events, has been obtained from the Continent, exceeds my moſt ſanguine expectations: but prudence will not permit me to give your Lordſhip, or the public, a detail of the information which has been already obtained, as it might prevent my procuring that which I have reaſon further to expect.

It is not accounts of a few ſolitary bags of wool conveyed to the Continent by the ſmugglers, as a return for brandy brought from thence, or even of caſual cargoes of more conſequence occaſionally ſent to France, which make up the ſum of my information; but I have been able to procure the moſt ſatisfactory evidence, that a regular trade in that article has been carried on to an amount beyond

beyond what even the manufacturers themſelves had any idea of.

Every ſtep I advance in this inquiry leads to more important diſcoveries; and I have no doubt of being able to lay before Parliament ſuch evidence as will ſurpriſe thoſe who now vaunt, that the manufacturers have raiſed a clamour about a thing which either hath no exiſtence, or at moſt is of very trifling conſequence. I will only add, my Lord, under this head, that proſecutions are now carrying on againſt ſeveral perſons for ſmuggling this article: and were not the undertaking too extenſive for the Committee, proſecutions might alſo be commenced againſt many other perſons in different parts of the kingdom.

It now remains to be conſidered,

Whether the preſent laws are ſufficient to prevent ſuch fraudulent practices, in caſe they were properly executed?

In order to point out clearly the defects in the wool laws now in force, it is neceſſary that they ſhould be diſtinctly reviewed; but I cannot expect either your Lordſhip, or the public at large, to attend to ſuch a laborious inveſtigation. I ſhall therefore content myſelf with taking notice of ſome of the prominent features, which are moſt eaſily delineated.

Of the laws now in force to prevent the exportation of wool, ſome are general, binding upon all parts of the kingdom within a certain diſtance from the ſea; others are particularly

ticularly binding only upon the counties of Kent and Suſſex.

The former of theſe oblige "Every grower "of wool reſiding within five miles of the "ſea, before he carries his wool home from "the place of ſhearing, to give notice ten days "after ſhearing, to the next officer of the "cuſtoms, of the true number of his fleeces, "and where it is houſed, and not to remove "the ſame without certifying to the ſaid of-"ficer under his hand his intention ſo to do "three days before." As there is no further controul over the wool, it is very eaſy to conſign it into the hands of the ſmuggler, and therefore in this reſpect the law is ineffectual*.

 Many

* The above clauſe, though meant by the legiſlature to be general, is only incidentally mentioned, agreeable to the looſe manner in which many of the acts are drawn; and I am inclined to believe that in ſome counties it is not attended to.

Many of the acts are alſo ſo vaguely expreſſed, and the clauſes of them ſo very unconnected, that it is frequently hardly poſſible to trace their real meaning.

The local laws are alſo defective, though not in ſo great a degree; the deſign of them is to oblige every grower of wool, in the diſtricts to which they extend, " To give an ac-
" count in writing, in three days after ſhear-
" ing, of his number of fleeces, and where
" lodged, to the next cuſtom-houſe officer;
" and the like notice, before he removes any
" part thereof, of the number of fleeces and
" the weight, and the name and abode of
" the perſon to whom it is diſpoſed, and the
" place where intended to be carried, and ſhall
" take a certificate from the officer who firſt
" entered the ſame, (paying ſix-pence) on

pain

" pain of forfeiting the wool; and alſo Three " Shillings for every pound thereof, as if it " had been actually exported."

So far they are calculated to anſwer the end propoſed; but having no clauſe requiring a return of the certificate, and an acknowledgment from the purchaſer, of his having received the wool, the intention of the legiſlature is defeated; it being very poſſible (and which can be confirmed by evidence) to convey wool out of the kingdom, and at the ſame time to comply with the letter of the law.

One of the clauſes in this act is likewiſe ſo abſurd, that it is abſolutely neceſſary, for the benefit of the trade, that the wool-dealer ſhould riſk the forfeiture of the bond which

which the law requires him to give, rather than comply with ſo injudicious a reſtriction.*

There are alſo defects in the laws for regulating the conveyance of wool coaſtwiſe. There is no controul over wool which is found lying on the common wharfs, from whence it may be eaſily conveyed on board veſſels bound to foreign parts, without any probability of detection. All wool, when it comes within the limits of a port, ceaſes to be under the controul of the officers of the cuſtoms; in conſequence of which, wool that

* By the clauſe in the act of the 9th and 10th of William, chap. 40, §. 3. "No perſon within 15 miles of the ſea, in the counties of Kent and Suſſex, ſhall buy any wool before he enters into bond, with ſureties, that all the wool he ſhall buy ſhall not be ſold by him to any perſon within 15 miles of the ſea." By this clauſe, every wool-dealer within the regiſter in the ſaid counties is abſolutely prohibited from ſelling his wool to any perſon in Yorkſhire, or any other county, who reſides within 15 miles of the ſea.

is brought from the country, and depoſited at Graveſend, (which is within the port of London) may paſs without any certificate; it is of courſe very eaſy to convey wool from thence on board veſſels (lying within the port of London) ready to tranſport the ſame to foreign countries.

To remedy theſe defects, and alſo to aboliſh injudicious reſtrictions, is the end of the intended bill; and this end it propoſes to attain, by extending the laws, at preſent binding only on the counties of Kent and Suſſex, to all parts of the kingdom, within a limited diſtance from the ſea, but with ſuch alterations and enlargements, as will give them that effect and energy of which they are at preſent deſtitute, and by ſuggeſting ſuch regulations in other caſes as may appear neceſſary.

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To compleat a plan of ſuch an extenſive nature, and in which ſo many intereſts are involved, without experiencing oppoſition, is hardly to be expected; but it was the endeavour of the Committee, in drawing up the heads of the bill, to effect the end deſigned in a manner the leaſt oppreſſive to the parties concerned.

The opponents of the bill have aſked, "How the manufacturers can act ſo abſurd-"ly, as to demand an extenſion of the laws "which now ſubſiſt in the counties of Kent "and Suſſex, when it is ſuppoſed, that the "greateſt quantities of wool are ſmuggled "from theſe parts?"

In reply to this, the fact is not ſubſtantiated, that the greateſt quantities are ſmuggled from

from theſe two counties; on the contrary, it will appear that larger quantities are ſmuggled from other parts of the kingdom, where no ſuch regulations exiſt. But owing to the regiſter in the above counties, the quantity of wool grown within a certain diſtance of the ſea is more accurately known; and from hence it may be determined, with much greater certainty than in other parts, how much wool is taken off by the ſmugglers. The queſtion put by our opponents ſuppoſes, that theſe laws, inſtead of reſtraining the practice of ſmuggling, are an actual encouragement of it: this, however, is not the caſe: they are, as deſigned to prevent ſmuggling, good in their principle; but this principle not being ſufficiently extended, the end propoſed by the Legiſlature is not fully anſwered.

There

There is one part of the bill, which may be more violently oppoſed than even all the regulations for preventing the exportation of wool; I mean that which relates to the falſe winding of the article.

The law now in being for the regulation of winding or making up the fleece of wool, paſſed ſo long ago as the reign of Henry the VIIIth; and from the difference in the value of money between that and the preſent period, the penalty which was then enacted for the breach of the law is *now* ſo trifling, that it is ſcarcely worth any perſon's trouble to commence a proſecution for damages, except at common law.

The neceſſity of more ample proviſion for the ſecurity of the wool-dealer, in this inſtance,

ſtance, is therefore univerſally confeſſed, and will be fully aſcertained by evidence when demanded. How far it may be poſſible to prevent all the ill conſequences which follow from the preſent mode of marking the ſheep, and from the ſhameful manner of making up the wool, it is impoſſible to determine; but the importance of theſe objects may be ſeen by referring to the journals of the Houſe of Commons.

I have now, I hope, fully explained the two poſitions previouſly advanced, in as conciſe a manner as the nature of the ſubject will admit.

The legiſlature has already determined on the neceſſity of preventing the exportation of wool; and the manufacturers only wiſh for

for ſuch additions and amendments to the preſent laws, as appear neceſſary to effect the deſign propoſed by them.

To affirm that the bill is entirely free from defects, would be the moſt unwarrantable vanity on the part of the manufacturers; and had its opponents conducted themſelves with candour, this appeal would have been unneceſſary; but every method has been tried, which ingenuity could deviſe, to render the promoters of the bill obnoxious to the Landowners; and it is become abſolutely neceſſary, that the manufacturers ſhould vindicate themſelves from thoſe aſperſions which have been ſo wantonly thrown on their principles and conduct.

It is, indeed, one of the maxims of the great *Sir Joſiah Child*, "that a merchant (as a

merchant) is incapable of having juſt views of commerce, where his intereſt is concerned." Though I am perſuaded that this, like other general rules, is not without its exceptions, yet I will not at preſent ſet myſelf to oppoſe it, but will freely acknowledge the abſolute neceſſity of the Legiſlature's guarding, with the greateſt circumſpection, againſt haſtily adopting propoſals for new regulations, either from manufacturers or from any other perſons.

A manufacturer may probably affix too great a degree of criminality to the exportation of wool; nor is it proper that the merits of the queſtion ſhould be decided by thoſe alone, whoſe intereſt is ſuppoſed to be immediately concerned. But whatever errors an attention to our own intereſts may have occaſioned,

for ſuch additions and amendments to the preſent laws, as appear neceſſary to effect the deſign propoſed by them.

To affirm that the bill is entirely free from defects, would be the moſt unwarrantable vanity on the part of the manufacturers; and had its opponents conducted themſelves with candour, this appeal would have been unneceſſary; but every method has been tried, which ingenuity could deviſe, to render the promoters of the bill obnoxious to the Landowners; and it is become abſolutely neceſſary, that the manufacturers ſhould vindicate themſelves from thoſe aſperſions which have been ſo wantonly thrown on their principles and conduct.

It is, indeed, one of the maxims of the great *Sir Joſiah Child*, " that a merchant (as a

merchant) is incapable of having juſt views of commerce, where his intereſt is concerned." Though I am perſuaded that this, like other general rules, is not without its exceptions, yet I will not at preſent ſet myſelf to oppoſe it, but will freely acknowledge the abſolute neceſſity of the Legiſlature's guarding, with the greateſt circumſpection, againſt haſtily adopting propoſals for new regulations, either from manufacturers or from any other perſons.

A manufacturer may probably affix too great a degree of criminality to the exportation of wool; nor is it proper that the merits of the queſtion ſhould be decided by thoſe alone, whoſe intereſt is ſuppoſed to be immediately concerned. But whatever errors an attention to our own intereſts may have occaſioned,

occaſioned, we may ſafely truſt for the removal of them to the wiſdom of Parliament, who, being free from prejudice in favour of any particular claſs of men, will be able to judge with impartiality, and to decide in a manner the beſt adapted to promote the public welfare.

For my own part, I have ever conſidered the ſubject as of national importance, and unworthy of attention in any other point of view; and though I am anxiouſly deſirous of intereſting your Lordſhip in the cauſe of the manufacturers, ſo far as it ſhall appear to be conſiſtent with the public good, yet I will not attempt to impoſe on your judgment by any arguments, except ſuch as appear to myſelf to be founded in truth.

Our

Our opponents will attempt to blend the conſideration of the hardſhip which they may ſuppoſe the wool-grower to labour under from the prohibition of exporting wool, with the objects of the preſent enquiry; but for the credit of the manufacturers, I hope your Lordſhip will clearly diſcern the propriety of keeping theſe things ſeparate and diſtinct. Nothing more is required of the manufacturers, than to prove the preſent laws ineffectual, and to demonſtrate the exiſtence of the ſmuggling of wool to a conſiderable extent.

If theſe two poſitions ſhall appear properly ſupported, the manufacturers will fully prove their public aſſertions; and are, therefore, juſtified in their application for an amendment of the preſent laws.

I am very far from blaming a wool-grower in Lincolnſhire, or in any other part of the kingdom, for endeavouring to obtain the privilege of exporting wool, provided it can be demonſtrated to be of no national diſadvantage; but, in the preſent circumſtance, the manufacturers are not called upon to combat this opinion; and without the leaſt imputation of declining the conteſt, for want of ability to ſupport it, they would be fully juſtified in taking that for granted which Parliament by its prohibitory acts has fully eſtabliſhed, viz. that *the exportation of wool is detrimental to the nation.*——I will, however, hazard a few obſervations on this delicate ſubject.

The beſt author, who has profeſſedly treated on the expediency of exporting Britiſh wool, is Mr. *Smith*, in his Hiſtory of Wool.

I have

I have read this performance with much ſatisfaction, and I admire the impartiality which pervades the greater part of this author's works. There is one material point, however, in which he is defective; and every ſucceeding writer on the ſubject is liable to be charged with the ſame defect.

The wool of this kingdom may be conſidered under two grand diviſions, which are well known by the appellation of Combing Wool and Clothing Wool; and tho' there is a great variety of ſorts, which may be claſſed under each diviſion, yet they are eſſentially different. But this diſtinction is by no means accurately obſerved by Mr. *Smith*, or by any other author who has treated on this ſubject. ——I will readily grant, that many things which have been advanced by ſome injudi-

cious authors, on the abſolute neceſſity of our wool to the manufacturers of France, are deſtitute of foundation; and that it is not true, what has been frequently advanced as a fact, " That the French can neither make " their ſuperfine cloth from Spaniſh Wool, " nor *any* of the inferior ſorts from their " own, without a mixture of Engliſh wool." But it does not from hence follow, that ſome kinds of our wool are not eſſential to the proper manufacturing of particular fabricks, in which they endeavour to rival this kingdom.

It has been my grand object, through the progreſs of this inquiry, to obtain the moſt authentic information of the uſes to which the French apply the wool of this country, and to aſcertain the true reaſon why they are induced to give ſuch a price for it as may compenſate the ſmuggler for his riſk.

From a variety of intelligence which I have received, I am now fully convinced, that our combing wool in particular is abſolutely neceſſary in ſome of the French manufactures, and that, without it, they cannot manufacture ſome ſpecies of goods in imitation of the Engliſh fabrick.

As the price of labour in many of the provinces of that kingdom is undoubtedly lower than in England,* this advantage will in a great meaſure compenſate for the extra price which they are obliged to pay for Engliſh wool. And as the proportion of

* From the beſt information which I can obtain, the rate of wages in the woollen manufacture of France is not materially different from what it is in England, particularly in the article of ſuperfine cloth; but in thoſe places where the coarſer goods are made, the wages of the manufacturers are lower. The difference, however, is by no means ſo material as to warrant the concluſions which have been drawn from it by the oppoſers of the Commercial Treaty with France.

labour to the price of the raw materials, in ſome of the lighter fabricks in which combing wool is employed, is very conſiderable; a very ſmall difference in the price of labour, thro' the different ſtages of manufacturing a piece of goods, will compenſate for the advance on the raw materials from which it is made.

If, therefore, our own manufacturers can conſume all the wool of the kingdom, of that kind which is ſo neceſſary to the French, it appears incompatible with ſound policy to permit its exportation.

In making up an aſſortment of goods for a foreign market, it is often abſolutely neceſſary to compriſe a variety of manufactures; and the want of thoſe goods to the French, which are made either intirely or in part from

Engliſh

Engliſh wool, muſt be a conſiderable diſadvantage in their foreign trade. If they cannot make them, by being precluded from obtaining our wool, they muſt of neceſſity purchaſe them from this country; and no perſon the leaſt converſant in commercial affairs will pretend to deny, that it is much more for the intereſt of the kingdom to export a manufactured article, than the raw materials of which it is compoſed.

Theſe remarks are confined entirely to the article of combing wool; but the apparent probability of an extenſive commercial intercourſe with France, having introduced to my acquaintance ſome very eminent woollen-drapers, natives of that kingdom, who have come to England for the purpoſe of ſettling a correſpondence with the Britiſh manu-

manufacturers; I have availed myſelf of this favourable opportunity to procure every poſſible information on the article of wool; and from the converſation I have had with them on this ſubject, I am fully convinced, that ſome kinds of our clothing wool are very neceſſary in making the French fabricks of the inferior qualities, denominated in England ſecond or livery cloths; and that probably no other kind of wool, which can be obtained by the manufacturers of France, is a proper ſubſtitute in the manufacturing of ſuch goods.

I am well informed, that during the war, when the introduction of Britiſh wool to France was attended with particular difficulty, the manufacturers of Sedan made but little cloth; but that ſince the peace, the trade in that place has much increaſed, from the facility

facility with which our wool is now procured. One of the perſons with whom I had particular converſation on this ſubject, and who is a very intelligent man, did not heſitate to declare, that if we could keep our wool from being ſent to France, we muſt have an undoubted advantage over their manufactures in the woollen branch from the commercial treaty.

From hence appears the neceſſity of an act which may be *effectual* for keeping our own wool within the kingdom;* for, by having this valuable article in much greater abundance and

* I beg it may be obſerved, that I am not ſetting myſelf directly to prove the neceſſity of prohibiting the exportation of wool, on general principles, which would require a more comprehenſive view of the ſubject than I chuſe now to take of it; and that where I advance any argument of my own, it is on the ſuppoſition of the manufacturers being able to conſume the wool of the kingdom; as I am no advocate for depreſſing the value of wool beyond a fair average price, merely that the manufacturer may purchaſe it at a very low rate; which, as I ſhall note in the progreſs

and variety than the French, our manufacturers may perhaps, more than by any other means, be able to ſupport a competition with the manufacturers of that nation.

Doctor A. SMITH, in his work intitled, "An inquiry into the Nature and Cauſes of "the Wealth of Nations," has aſſerted, "that "the price of wool has fallen very conſider-"ably ſince the reign of Edward IIId;" and he has attributed the cauſe of this degradation, in the value of that article, to the effects of violence and artifice.

Firſt; To what he calls the abſurd prohibition of exporting wool from England.

progreſs of this publication, does not appear to be any laſting advantage to himſelf. I do not however mean, that the low price of wool for a ſhort period of time, and which may be produced by circumſtances affecting all concerns in general, is to be conſidered as a good reaſon in itſelf (and abſtracted from all other conſiderations) for permitting the exportation of the article.

2*dly*; To the permiſſion of importing Spaniſh wool, duty free. And,

3*dly*; To the prohibition of exporting wool from Ireland to any other part, except to England alone.

That learned author alſo ſtates, that there are many authentic records which demonſtrate, that during the reign of the above prince, a tod of Engliſh wool of 28lb. was worth thirty ſhillings of our preſent money; but that, in the preſent times, twenty-one ſhillings may be reckoned a *very good* price for *very good* Engliſh wool.

This ſtatement is certainly erroneous. For in the year 1776, when Dr. *Smith*'s publication firſt appeared, the price of a tod of Wiltſhire wool was from twenty to twenty-

two

two ſhillings; and the wool of this county can be eſteemed only in the third claſs of Engliſh clothing wool; not only the counties of Hereford, Salop, and Suſſex, (in which the fineſt wool is produced in any conſiderable quantities) but alſo Surry, Dorſet, Somerſet, and ſeveral others, being confeſſedly ſuperior. —From this ſtatement, therefore, it appears that 21s. per tod was by no means *a very good* price for very good Engliſh wool, at the time when the Doctor publiſhed his work.

The argument will, however, appear much ſtronger at the preſent time. Wiltſhire wool ſold laſt year at much the ſame price as the preceding year, which was from twenty-eight to thirty ſhillings per tod; and all the clothing wool in the kingdom is advanced proportionably in value.

A tod

A tod of fine Herefordſhire wool was ſold in the year 1785, from *forty to forty-two ſhillings*, and it ſunk in value but very little at the laſt fairs, after ſhearing.

In the courſe of my examination of the merits of the Iriſh propoſitions, I found, in ſome of the official papers which were tranſmitted to me, an average price of the wool of England for ſeveral years, which appearing to me very erroneous, I endeavoured to obtain information how it was fixed, but could by no means meet with proper ſatisfaction. Indeed it is almoſt impoſſible for any writer, from theory alone, to ſtate with accuracy the average prices of Engliſh wool. —Though the preſent price of Engliſh wool much exceeds what it was ſome years ſince, yet poſſibly a fair average at the preſent in-

ſtant

ſtant might not exceed an average made at a more diſtant period. The fact is, that the coarſer wools now bear a much greater proportion to the finer ſorts, than they did ten or twelve years ago; which is owing to the preſent improved ſyſtem of agriculture, and the introduction of a larger breed of ſheep. —Allowing, therefore, that the arguments which the Doctor produces, in order to prove that the real price of wool in the reign of Edward the IIId. was ſtill ſuperior to the nominal price, yet he will fail in his proof of the degradation *in value* of that article in the preſent times.

That the wool of England has ſuffered a degradation *in point of quality*, even within ſeventeen or eighteen years paſt,* no perſon

* My own experience does not enable me to ſpeak of a more diſtant period; but from the teſtimony of other perſons, I am convinced of its having ſuffered, in point of quality, more than I am ſenſible of myſelf.

at all acquainted with the ſubject will pretend to deny, though the price has ſo much advanced in general.

There is no good ground to ſuppoſe, that the introduction of Spaniſh wool into this kingdom tends to leſſen the value of our own production. The importations from Spain cannot poſſibly affect any other than Engliſh wool of the firſt quality, (except it ſhould be allowed that ſome of the inferior ſorts of Spaniſh wool are cheaper than our own of a ſimilar quality, which, if true, will certainly militate ſtrongly againſt the arguments of other perſons who have written on this ſubject:) and indeed the manufacturers of this kingdom will agree in aſſerting the direct contrary of the above poſition, fine Engliſh wool, except under ſome particular circumſtances,

ſtances, having always riſen in value in proportion to the riſe on Spaniſh wool, notwithſtanding the imports from Spain in that commodity have been nearly doubled within the laſt fifty years; nor has Engliſh clothing wool of the inferior qualities been diminiſhed, but on the contrary, has advanced in value during the above period.

The competition of the wool of Ireland with that of England, in our market, is ſcarcely worth noticing; the quantity of wool grown in Ireland is very far from being conſiderable, and the imports from thence have been conſtantly declining for many years paſt; which may be owing in part to the Iriſh having turned their attention to the breeding of large cattle, ſince the impolitic act of Charles the IId was repealed, by which

they

they were reſtricted from exporting their live cattle to this kingdom, and alſo from the privilege which the Iriſh now enjoy (of which no liberal mind will envy them) of exporting their woollen manufactures to other markets beſides that of England.

The reputation which Doctor *Smith*'s publications have juſtly obtained, naturally give weight to his opinions on every ſubject which hath fallen under his diſcuſſion; but the learned author cannot with propriety be offended with theſe obſervations from a perſon whom a conſiderable intereſt, as well as ſome experience, in the woollen manufactures of England, has rendered capable of forming a tolerably competent judgment of thoſe things which immediately relate to the buſineſs in which he is engaged.

On this account, I have been induced to throw out theſe remarks on what the above author hath advanced on the article of wool, which are not founded on inferences drawn from theoretical reaſoning, but on an appeal to facts; which, in treating a ſubject like the preſent, ought alone to have weight.

As I do not pretend to treat this ſubject otherwiſe than in a curſory manner, it is not neceſſary for me to note the obſervations on the expediency of an exportation of Britiſh wool, which have been advanced by *every writer* who has occaſionally delivered his ſentiments on it.

There is nothing materially different in the remarks of *Lord Kames* from thoſe of Dr. *A. Smith*, except in one particular, which I have

I have noticed at the end of my obſervations on *Sir John Dalrymple*'s pamphlet in favour of exporting our wool, which was publiſhed when the Lincolnſhire petition was preſented, and which was anſwered by Dr. *Foſter*.—— Whether that anſwer be ſufficiently ſatisfactory, is not neceſſary for me to prove, as I do not by any means intend making myſelf a party in the cauſe; my deſign being only to note thoſe defects which are apparent in the advocates for the meaſure; I will only juſt obſerve, that *Sir John Dalrymple* ſtates, "That he had examined *every* flock of ſheep "and magazine of wool in Portugal, Spain, "and France, that lay within his reach; and "that he can with certainty declare, that "*every ſpecies* of wool is to be found in Spain "and Portugal, except the *long wool* of Lin-"colnſhire. In Languedoc, he obſerves, are

" the ſhort wools of the weſt and ſouth coaſts " of England, and the long wools of Lin- " colnſhire, *in perfection*."

Allowing the facts to be truly ſtated, it may be very naturally aſked *in what quantity* is the Lincolnſhire wool found in Languedoc? as he only mentions this particular province, and allows that there is none of the kind in Spain or Portugal.

For my part I am clearly convinced, from experience, that the fine and middling wools of England, in contradiction to what muſt be inferred from the general reaſoning in *Mr. Smith*'s Hiſtory of Wool, are equally high in price with the wools of Spain and Portugal, that bear any reſemblance to them. If the French, therefore, have the *combing wool*, and the

the *lower kinds* of wool in plenty, ſimilar to the growth of England, why are they induced to give ſuch prices as are ſufficient to anſwer the riſk which the ſmuggler runs in procuring them from England?

I have aſſigned *my reaſons* for this in the beginning of theſe obſervations; and, if any others can be adduced, I ſhall be glad to have them pointed out, as the inveſtigation of truth is my only object.

Sir John aſks, "Why allow the exporta-
"tion of wheat, and prohibit the exportation
"of wool?" when it ſhall be proved that the French can be ſupplied, either by an increaſe of their own growth, or from other countries, with combing wool ſimilar to that of England; and alſo with the lower

kinds of clothing wool, properly adapted for making the ſort of goods, which I have mentioned above; it will be ſoon enough to anſwer this queſtion.

Dean *Tucker*'s reflections on the low price of wools, publiſhed in 1782, will not in general be objected to by a candid manufacturer; but, on his *own ground*, there can be now no reaſon for permitting the exportation of wool; as he acknowledges, "that the overflowings "of the home market, after the natives have "been ſupplied, ſhould alone be exported." I believe it will not be proved that there is at preſent any want of demand for the low wools of England; the flouriſhing ſtate of the Baize trade, and the large conſumption of coarſe wool for the *Carpet Manufactory*, muſt prevent any quantity from remaining long

long in hand. At this inſtant I am alſo informed, that the manufacturers of Witney in Oxfordſhire are very much in want of coarſe wool, which is alſo the caſe at Kidderminſter in Worceſterſhire.

I have lately heard with pleaſure, from a friend of mine who reſided ſome time in Conſtantinople, that by accident the article of Shalloons has been introduced into Turkey, and that the conſumption was likely to be conſiderable, which muſt eventually be advantageous to the growers of combing wool.

The Dean has propoſed a ſcheme ſimilar to one which may be ſeen in *Smith*'s hiſtory of wool, viz. " To allow the exportation of " wool under a certain duty, and the monies " ariſing from the duty to be applied as a " bounty

" bounty on the exportation of woollens." He obſerves, " That this regulation would, " like a two-edged ſword, act both ways. " The more wool was exported, the greater " would be the reward to be given for ex- " porting our own manufactures made out of " the ſame kind of wool; ſo that the evil, (ſo " much dreaded, or apprehended) viz. the " exportation of the raw material, would " operate as a premium in favour of the " Engliſh manufacturer at a foreign market." —This propoſal is certainly liberal; but I muſt confeſs, that neither the *conciſe arguments* of the *Dean*, or the *more dilated ones* of *Mr. Smith*, in its favour, have convinced me of its propriety.

Mr. Smith aſſerts, that the wool-grower is intitled to have a better price for his wool; and

and that the conſequence of his propoſal being carried into effect, would be an advance upon this article. Whatever neceſſity might be pleaded for ſuch a meaſure when he wrote, I hope I ſhall not be deemed an enemy to the wool-grower, if I aſſert that at preſent it no longer exiſts; ſince not only the wool, but alſo the carcaſe of the ſheep, is ſo much increaſed in value.

But I ſhould be glad to know, if the foreign manufacturers can purchaſe our wool, burdened with this duty and the charges of ſhipping it, and manufacture it for their own and other markets abroad, how the Britiſh manufacturer is to be benefited by the bounty? He can only derive advantage from it, by being able to ſupply the foreign market; but from this he will be utterly excluded, if the

foreign

foreign manufacturer, either from *the low price of labour*, or from *whatever other cauſe*, is able to ſupply it himſelf to greater advantage.

Either our wool would *not be exported* under the propoſed duty; or elſe, *if exported*, the export of manufactured goods would decreaſe in proportion to the quantity of the raw materials ſent out of the kingdom. I do not ſee how this argument can be refuted, except it ſhall be ſaid, that the wool, thus exported, will ſerve only to ſupply thoſe foreign markets to which we have *no acceſs*. But this appears to be a concluſion, which it is not poſſible to ſupport.

If, therefore, I am not deceived in the juſtneſs of the inference which I have drawn, the propoſal can only be claſſed among thoſe which

which have a ſpecious appearance in theory; but which, when reduced to practice, vaniſh like " the baſeleſs fabric of a viſion."

Though I am ſorry to obſerve, that the *Dean* has in ſome meaſure adopted the language which is ſo very faſhionable reſpecting the monopolizing ſpirit of the manufacturers, and with which even the ingenuous and candid *Smith* was ſtrongly tinctured, yet he deſerves the thanks of the wool-grower as well as the manufacturer, (who is alſo indebted to him on many other accounts) for ſuggeſting another plan, which, if encouraged, might tend to the increaſe of the woollen manufacture.

It does not appear very conſiſtent with liberality of ſentiment, to declaim againſt the monopolizing

monopolizing ſpirit of the manufacturers, when it muſt be confeſſed that the charge is equally applicable to other claſſes of men as well as to them.

Is there more enlargedneſs of mind diſcoverable in thoſe countries, where trade and commerce are deſpiſed by the haughty tyrant of an extenſive but impoveriſhed domain, exerting the feudal ſpirit over a wretched peaſantry, than in this kingdom, where trade and commerce, cheriſhed and protected by an enlightened legiſlature, diſpenſe their bleſſings to all ranks and conditions of men?

The prejudiced and uninformed manufacturer may indeed not heſitate to declare, that it is of no conſequence to him how low the wool of this country ſinks in value,

as

as it will enable him to go to market on better terms; and alſo be one mean of bringing the gentlemen of landed property nearer to his own level, by diminiſhing the value of their eſtates. On the contrary, the proud and bigotted land-owner may look down with contempt on the merchant or manufacturer, and fooliſhly ſuppoſe, that he can derive neither profit nor advantage from any ſort of connexion with them; and that every approach to a union tends only to debaſe his own dignity.

But the truly enlightened perſon, how exalted ſoever his rank may be, will never experience any degradation from a proper aſſociation with thoſe who are capable of affording him information, on points with which, from the nature of his education, he cannot

cannot be ſuppoſed to be converſant; and he will feel no envy at the increaſe of the trade and commerce of the kingdom; while, on the other hand, the merchant or manufacturer, whoſe views are extended beyond his compting-houſe or workſhop, will, without any proſtitution of character to *mere rank* and fortune, place a juſt value on the connection, and will view with pleaſure the improvement of landed eſtates, enabled by ſuch improvement to ſupport thoſe accumulated loads under which they at preſent labour.

That ſelf-intereſt is ſtill too prevalent among the generality of manufacturers, as well as mere land-owners, cannot be diſputed; but inſtead of foſtering prejudices between the landed and manufacturing intereſt, it would

would be much more patriotic to point out the errors of each, and to evince the neceſſity of a cordial union.

Any reply to what has been again advanced by the author of the Annals of Agriculture, on the wool bill, in his 37th number, cannot be expected from me.

Till *Mr. Young* has either proved the aſſertions which he ſo confidently threw out in his 36th number of the Annals of Agriculture, or has candour enough to retract them; I am confident that, without being liable to the imputation either of vanity or arrogance, I may not only diſregard the unwarrantable alluſions, but that I may alſo paſs by unnoticed the arguments of a perſon who appears in the preſent inſtance to be

under

under the influence of prejudice in ſuch a degree, that it is ſcarcely poſſible for him to have that regard to truth which is ſo eſſential to an impartial inveſtigation of the ſubject which he profeſſes to diſcuſs.*

Nothing can be more contrary to liberality of ſentiment, than after having pointed out a perſon by diſcriminating marks, which no one could miſtake, to affect an air of ſuperiority, merely becauſe that perſon had ſpirit enough to repel the attack on his own account, and in behalf of the manufacturers in general: but in vain does the author of the Annals endeavour to conceal his inability to prove what he had advanced, by amuſing

* It is neceſſary to obſerve, that Mr. *Young* had aſſerted it to be the deſign of the framers of the bill to obſtruct the conveyance of wool to the North; and that I publickly challenged him to prove this aſſertion.

his

his readers with obſervations and remarks totally foreign to the ſubject.

There are ſome perſons, my Lord, with whom the ingenuous and liberal-minded man can with difficulty be at variance; and whoſe errors and miſtakes he would, if conſiſtent with a juſt regard to truth, ſuppreſs, rather than expoſe.

I can truly ſay that this is the caſe with me, in reſpect to the author of the Annals of Agriculture. Being each of us members of the Agriculture Society at Bath, it is natural to ſuppoſe, that an author, who has written ſo much on huſbandry affairs, could not in his literary character be unknown to me; and our late worthy Secretary had excited in my mind a deſire of being perſonally

acquainted with the author, as, in his opinion, we ſhould be mutually pleaſed with each other's converſation.

I muſt confeſs therefore, that when I firſt ſaw the 36th number of the Annals of Agriculture, I was really mortified, not on account of the author's diſapprobation of the bill, and his entertaining an opinion contrary to that which had been given by the manufacturers, (which would have given me no offence) but merely from the illiberal ſpirit which was diſcovered in the publication, and the groſs calumny thrown on the framers of the bill, founded only in giving credit to thoſe falſhoods which had been ſo induſtriouſly propagated.

I ſhall, my Lord, leave my readers either to condemn or acquit me for the publication

of my Card addreſſed to the author, after they have peruſed his firſt attack in the 36th number of the Annals; only juſt obſerving, that not one of the Committee knew any thing of my card, till it had been ſent to the Secretary in London for publication; though the author of the Annals, having aſſerted that the manufacturers aſſembled merely to raiſe ſubſcriptions in order to publiſh abuſive advertiſements againſt him, has aſſumed to himſelf the merit of being perſecuted by *a meeting*,* which never had any exiſtence but in his own fertile imagination.

Though I have declined myſelf replying to his obſervations, yet his miſrepreſentations

* I poſitively declare that no meeting has been held ſince Mr. *Young*'s firſt publication; and that, to the beſt of my knowledge, his name was never mentioned at any of our meetings.

and falſe concluſions have been well expoſed, by one of our committee, in the Norwich Chronicle.

I muſt beg permiſſion to notice what appears to me very ſingular conduct in a *noble author*.† His Lordſhip, in his book entitled "Obſervations on the Commerce of the "American States," in pages 7, 8, &c. has made ſome remarks on the woollen trade of England and France, and points out the ſuperiority of the woollen manufacture of this country over that of France, particularly in the article of middling and coarſe cloths; and by comparing the quality of the wool which grows in this country with that of France, proves that the French are deſirous of obtaining our wool. Though his Lordſhip is

† Lord Sheffield.

miſtaken

miſtaken in ſome points relative to the ſubject; yet it is a ſatisfaction to obſerve in his work a full confirmation of my own opinion, reſpecting the wool and the woollen manufacture of France.

In a note under page 8, are the following remarks:——

" Several perſons are now in England, ſent " from France to obſerve the management of " our flocks, in order to acquire knowledge " relative to wool. They may obſerve, that " it will be neceſſary to change the climate " and whole ſyſtem of huſbandry in France, " before that country can raiſe any quantity " of wool ſuch as ours." How does this agree with *Sir John Dalrymple*'s account mentioned above?

His Lordſhip goes on to obſerve: " The " quantity of wool raiſed in France is *not* " *conſiderable*, when compared with the con- " ſumption. We may in ſome degree judge, " from the ſeizures, of *the increaſe of the* " *practice of ſmuggling wool.* In 1770, the " quantity ſeized was only 32 pounds. In " 1780, it had increaſed to 12383 pounds; " and in 1782, it amounted to 13916 pounds"

By this mode of arguing, (which muſt be confeſſed by every impartial perſon to be not deſtitute of force) I can prove the ſtill greater increaſe of the practice; as in the years 1783 and 1784 the quantities ſeized were much larger; but waving this, I wiſh to know how his Lordſhip can reconcile the ſentiments above quoted, which were given to the public in the year 1784, with that determined op-

poſition

poſition manifeſted by him at the county meeting held ſome time ſince at Lewes in Suſſex, againſt a bill which is deſigned to check the practice of ſmuggling a neceſſary commodity into a kingdom acknowledged to be a powerful rival, and the quality of whoſe wool is confeſſed by his Lordſhip to be *much inferior* to our own.

His Lordſhip may, perhaps, alledge in his juſtification, that though he is an enemy to the ſmuggling of wool, yet the regulations propoſed are ſo injurious to the land-owners, wool-growers, &c. that the remedy propoſed will be worſe than the diſeaſe; but before he adduces this plea, let him fairly examine the intended bill, and compare it with the preſent laws. This I am pretty confident his Lordſhip had not done when he delivered his

ſentiments

ſentiments at Lewes; as he was repeatedly informed by the Secretary of the wool meeting, who attended there, that ſome of the clauſes, to which his Lordſhip objected, were merely copied from the preſent laws. Had he taken any pains to examine the bill, he never would have hazarded the aſſertion, "That if the bill paſſed in its preſent form, "no maſter of a veſſel would ever be found "willing to carry wool coaſtwiſe."

From what has been before obſerved, it is unneceſſary for me to notice what his Lordſhip was pleaſed to ſay reſpecting the plan propoſed by the framers of the bill, of reſtricting, as much as poſſible, the conveyance of wool to the North, through envy and jealouſy againſt the manufacturers in that part of the kingdom.

I have,

I have, however, omitted to notice what is a complete anſwer to this aſſertion, viz. That ſeveral reſpectable wool-dealers in London were on the committee, and gave conſtant attendance at the meeting, whoſe connexions in the Weſt are trifling indeed, when compared with thoſe which they have in the North. If, therefore, any ſuch deſign had been formed, they would not have acted wiſely in aſſenting to regulations, deſigned to check and controul their principal trade.

Before his Lordſhip again declaims on the declining manufactures of the Weſt, I would wiſh him to be better acquainted with the actual ſtate of the trade in thoſe parts. Though, from ſeveral favourable circumſtances, the manufacturers of the North have acquired a conſiderable part of the

the coarſe trade of thoſe counties, yet within fifty years paſt the annual conſumption of Spaniſh wool, in this kingdom, has increaſed from ſix thouſand bags to between eleven and twelve thouſand; and the far greater part of this is conſumed in the counties of Wilts, Gloceſter, and Somerſet.

It may be neceſſary alſo to inform his Lordſhip, that a ſpirit of invention, as it reſpects new fabricks, has for many years been prevalent in the *Weſtern Counties*; and to this cauſe muſt principally be aſcribed *that predilection for Engliſh woollen manufactures, which for ſome time paſt has been ſo conſpicuous in the French nation.**

* I do not mean to inſinuate, that if it had not been for the introduction of fancy articles into France, our inferior ſorts of woollens would not in conſequence of the Commercial Treaty have found their way into that kingdom; but only that the circumſtance alluded to has, with other cauſes, excited a deſire of being ſupplied with Engliſh cloths.

This

This introduction of new fabricks, which had their origin in the Weſt, has been of the greateſt ſervice to the manufacturers of the North. Though the different ſorts of fancy goods manufactured in the Northern counties, principally from Engliſh wool, now form a conſiderable branch of their trade; yet I believe I ſhall run no hazard in challenging his Lordſhip to produce any one fabrick of Northern manufacture that was not copied from the finer ſorts made in the Weſtern counties.

I aſſure his Lordſhip, that ſo far from envying the flouriſhing ſtate of the manufactures in the North, I really rejoice at their extenſion, conſidered in a national point of view. The induſtry and frugality of the lower manufacturers, joined to a very great attention

attention in making their goods, and aided by the aſſiſtance of machines, have enabled them to furniſh their extenſive cloth-halls with an ample ſupply of fabricks. Hence the wholeſale dealer can, without delay, ſupply the orders which, by the medium of his agents, he is conſtantly receiving from different parts of the kingdom: and from hence alſo, the merchant can make his aſſortment for the German, Portugal, and other markets, without being obliged to give his orders to the manufacturers, except in ſome particular caſes.

Theſe flouriſhing manufactories have undoubtedly added to the wealth of the kingdom; and on this account the noble author would have been juſtified in holding them out to publick view, as objects of real conſequence,

ſequence, which ought not to be cramped by the narrow views of any ſet of men whatever. If, after a fair examination, ſuch a deſign had been diſcovered in the promoters of the wool bill, they would have deſerved the indignation not only of *his Lordſhip*, but of the nation at large.

If the manufacturers of the Weſt were implicitly to adopt all the principles upon which the trade is carried on in the North, they would undoubtedly deprive themſelves of ſome particular advantage which they at preſent enjoy; yet I acknowledge the propriety of the general plan of manufacture which prevails in thoſe parts, and am convinced that, under certain regulations, it might be introduced into the counties of Wilts, Gloceſter, &c. not only with ſafety, but even with advantage.

Till

Till ſomething of this kind is done, in vain do the Weſtern manufacturers attribute all the benefits enjoyed by their Northern rivals, in the manufacture of cloths from Engliſh wool, to the introduction of machines for facilitating labour. Advantages are undoubtedly derived from theſe machines; and as they will by degrees more generally prevail in the Weſt, it is not improbable but that their uſe may in courſe of time effect the alteration, which in the inferior manufactures is ſo neceſſary to their perfection.

In the North, the *intereſt* of the ſmall manufacturer is *immediately concerned* in preventing every poſſible waſte in the making of his goods; and when his cloths are milled, he is able to diſpoſe of them without loſs of time in the public halls of Leeds or Halifax, where

where the merchant or wholeſale manufacturer can at any time ſupply himſelf with ſuch goods as he may want. Nothing more is requiſite from the merchant, than ſending the cloths to a public dreſſer, or finiſhing them himſelf; and in conſequence of this mode of purchaſing, he is under no neceſſity of keeping a large ſtock. On the contrary, the Clothier in the Weſt is obliged to go through all the proceſs of manufacturing, by the medium of perſons who, ſo far from *conſulting his intereſt*, are too generally diſpoſed to purloin and embezzle his property, and is obliged to employ a large capital for producing, comparatively ſpeaking, a ſmall quantity of goods; and, inſtead of having an open market from whence he might ſupply himſelf, muſt depend on his own ſtock alone for executing his orders.

Though

Though theſe inconveniences are inſeparable from ſome branches of the manufacture, particularly the fancy trade, yet there are others in which the happineſs of the work-people would be promoted, by placing them in a ſituation in which their *own intereſt* would be *immediately concerned* in reducing the price of goods; and this would put the principal manufacturers of the Weſt on a nearer equality with thoſe of the North.*

As nothing but a ſincere deſire of promoting the general good could have drawn from me theſe reflections on the preſent ſtate of the woollen manufacture in my own and the adjoining counties, they will, I hope, meet

* Though I have freely commented on the conduct of the noble author, which appears to have proceeded from want of ſufficient information, yet I am not inſenſible to the merit of his Lordſhip's publications, as I have received pleaſure and information by a peruſal of them.

with

with your Lordſhip's indulgence, though they may probably be deemed foreign to the ſubject of which I am treating.

I have ſeen a ſmall pamphlet lately publiſhed, intitled "Obſervations on the Wool Bill." Though the author has adopted the ſame argument that is above refuted, and in other reſpects, by aggravating trifling errors, has endeavoured to charge the promoters of the bill with want of capacity, yet I am ready to acknowledge, that he has pointed out ſome errors in the bill, and has manifeſted a competent acquaintance with the preſent laws; but I beg leave to aſſure him, that his principal objections would have been obviated without his aſſiſtance, from my own remarks, aided by thoſe that may be made in the committee, when aſſembled. I wiſh this

writer poſſeſſed more candour, than to have made the following remark, that it was the deſign of the manufacturers, " to effect that " by ſtratagem which they were afraid to " declare openly."

He obſerves, p. 9, " That in the new " clauſe beginning p. 15, it is to be enacted, " that every dealer within miles of the " ſea ſhall give an account of the wool in " his hands; but when the important and " alarming part of the clauſe, viz. the regu- " lation, &c. comes forward, the limit or " diſtance from the ſea is left out, doubtleſs " with the hope that the omiſſion might paſs " unobſerved, and that the reader might be " led to imagine, that the firſt mention of " the limit would extend to the whole clauſe." He had before inſinuated that it was the intention

tention of the framer of the bill, "to include "the wool-dealer generally in all parts of the "kingdom."

I muſt inform this writer, that no part of the bill is founded on artifice; for the propoſers of it are not ſuch idiots, as to ſuppoſe it poſſible, in a matter of this importance, to elude, not only the vigilance of Parliament, but alſo of every perſon concerned to oppoſe the bill. The fact is, it is a mere omiſſion, nor did the general meeting ever once intend to include any wool-dealer, in the regulations, who does not reſide within miles from the ſea. Whether the limit is to extend, in this reſpect, as far as fifteen miles from the ſea, is not yet fixed.

The reſolution of the Exeter Meeting, to which he alludes, was never adopted by the

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general meeting; nor was it ever deſigned to be brought forward. From the account I have already given of the riſe and progreſs of the bill, it appears that this writer is miſtaken, in ſuppoſing that it originated with the merchants and manufacturers of Exeter; which, in order to favour his argument, he ſtates to be the caſe.

I ſhall proceed no further in reply to this writer's remarks; which, in many inſtances, I could prove to be totally inapplicable. I will only obſerve, that he pretends it to be the deſign of the bill to annihilate the buſineſs of the wool-dealer, though, as before-mentioned, there are many perſons of this deſcription in the committee.——As I have profeſſed to ſeek aſſiſtance from every quarter, I ſhall willingly profit by the remarks

of

of this writer on thoſe few defects of the bill that I had not noticed. In ſome caſes, "the wounds of an enemy are preferable to the careſſes of a friend."

It is really a ſatisfaction to me, my Lord, that I am at laſt come to a concluſion of my remarks on the conduct of thoſe who have oppoſed the bill in this its infant ſtate.—— If moſt of the bills which are brought into parliament, though framed by perſons converſant in parliamentary buſineſs, are, when examined, found too defective to paſs without amendment, ſurely ſome lenity ſhould be ſhewn to a bill labouring under peculiar difficulties, and haſtily produced, merely for the purpoſe of making its principle more generally known, by being publiſhed under the ſanction of the Houſe of Commons.

I am very ready to allow, that even candid perſons may have ſome reaſon to ſuppoſe that the manufacturers have been careful, in particular inſtances, to exempt themſelves from the reſtrictions of the bill. But ſuppoſing the regulations reſpecting the wool-grower to be as burdenſome as they are falſely repreſented by our opponents, ought no diſtinction to be made between the wool-grower, who can be affected by them only once or twice in a year, and the manufacturer, who would, under ſimilar circumſtances, be ſubject to them conſtantly?

I am, however, well aware that ſome further regulations muſt take place reſpecting the manufacturers, otherwiſe the bill will in a great meaſure be uſeleſs; and that ſome exemptions muſt be given up.

It

It is, however, peculiarly hard that the bill ſhould be principally attacked on account of thoſe exemptions which were inſerted merely out of regard to the leſſer manufacturers in the North of England, as well as to thoſe on the Devonſhire coaſt.

There is one clauſe which was introduced at the requeſt of two gentlemen from Yorkſhire, that has been particularly noticed, by our opponents, as diſcovering the real deſign of the manufacturers. On examining the bill when printed, it plainly appeared that this clauſe muſt undergo an alteration. This was declared to be the ſentiments of the meetting by our public reſolutions; it is therefore extremely uncandid to comment on it in ſuch an invidious manner.* Had

* See the extracts from the bill publiſhed under the ſanction of the Suffolk meetings.

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Had thoſe perſons who compoſed the bill, conſidered *themſelves only*, without any reſpect to the ſmaller manufacturers, the bill would have been more ſimple in its form; and theſe complaints of partial exemptions would, in a great meaſure, have been prevented.

The reſolutions of different counties, that have been publiſhed in oppoſition to the bill, are mere copies of the Lincolnſhire ones, except (as far as I can recollect) thoſe of Suffolk. I have had an opportunity of conſulting ſome perſons who reſide in the counties of Kent and Suſſex, and they declare that, with a little alteration, the regulations will by no means be oppreſſive; and as the principle of the bill is already eſtabliſhed in thoſe counties, they are ſurely competent to decide on its merits in this reſpect.

Since

Since the county meeting in Suſſex, another meeting has been held at Lewes, at which Lord Sheffield preſided. At this meeting, the propoſal of holding a wool-fair at Lewes was adopted; and they agreed to inſtruct their Repreſentatives to obtain a repeal of thoſe regulations in the preſent laws which reſpect the removal of wool.

By the laws now in force, it is not only impoſſible to hold a wool-fair at Lewes; but every wool-dealer reſiding within ten miles of the ſea, in the counties of Kent and Suſſex, is obliged to violate one clauſe in the preſent act, ſhould he ſell wool to any perſon reſiding within fifteen miles of the ſea, as is apparent from the clauſe before quoted.

The bill in queſtion, which Lord S. treated with ſo little ceremony, would, if paſſed

paſſed into a law, render this clauſe of no force, and, as far as at preſent appears, would not in other reſpects ſubject the county of Suſſex to any new inconvenience.

It is declared in the reſolutions of the other counties as well as Suſſex, that the wool-growers already labour under ſufficient reſtrictions. This mode of delivering their ſentiments is very ambiguous.

If they mean by reſtrictions, that they are not permitted to export their wool, why are they afraid to declare their ſentiments openly? This would be taking a manly and decided part, and would bring the conteſt to a ſhort iſſue. Should they decline this ground, the only fair and candid mode of proceeding would be

be to join with the manufacturers in endeavouring to find out the beſt expedient for preventing the ſmuggling of wool, provided it can be proved that large quantities are actually exported for want of more effectual regulations.

It may elſe be ſuſpected, that though they are unwilling to avow the principle, yet their object is to oppoſe any regulation that may more effectually prevent the ſmuggling of this article.

Every ingenuous perſon, inſtead of involving a queſtion in obſcurity, would wiſh to ſtrip it of all unneceſſary appendages, and reduce it to as ſimple a form as poſſible. It is by no means my deſign, to raiſe improper ſuſpicions in the mind of any man; but it is my

my duty to point out the real ground of the argument, by ſtating it clearly and explicitly.

The method adopted in the county of Suffolk, of publiſhing thoſe clauſes in the bill which are deemed by their meetings to be moſt obnoxious, is in the higheſt degree partial, and has a tendency to impoſe on perſons unacquainted with the wool laws; no notice whatever being given how far they agree or diſagree with the laws now exiſting.

The very firſt clauſe ſelected for publication, by theſe reſolutions, is grounded on the Act of Henry VIII. reſpecting the falſe winding of wool, and is no otherwiſe altered than appears to be abſolutely neceſſary for the ſecurity of the purchaſer of wool at preſent, except in one inſtance reſpecting the pitch-mark.

I ſhall

I ſhall however wave any diſcuſſion of the merits of this or any other clauſe in the bill, for the reaſons which have been before aſſigned.

If ever effectual regulations for preventing the exportation of wool from this kingdom were neceſſary, they certainly are more peculiarly ſo at preſent.

Many years paſt I was informed by a perſon, who was then largely engaged in the exportation of woollens, that were a free trade opened to France, conſiderable quantities of our woollen goods would moſt certainly be introduced into that country.

My own experience fully confirms this opinion, having been applied to by French woollen-

woollen-drapers, for recommendations to manufacturers in this country for theſe kind of goods.

The wool-grower will undoubtedly participate in thoſe advantages which may ariſe to the manufacturers, from opening this new channel of trade, as the lower wools are already conſiderably advanced; no great generoſity is therefore manifeſted on their parts, in oppoſing the manufacturers with ſo much violence, and in treating their propoſals with ſuch acrimony, on account of their being deſirous of obtaining more effectual regulations, to prevent the exportation of of wool.

The commercial intercourſe which is likely to be eſtabliſhed between the two countries, will

will probably facilitate the ſmuggling of this article; and on this ground alone, it may be more neceſſary to adopt thoſe regulations which may be pointed out by the promoters of the bill.

Your Lordſhip is too well acquanted with my general principles, to ſuppoſe that I can be an advocate for unneceſſary reſtrictions on trade. Theſe principles will ever influence my conduct, (as has been manifeſted on a former occaſion) in giving my feeble ſupport to meaſures that have for their object an extenſion of trade and commerce, and it is impoſſible for me to approve of any that may bear hard on a particular claſs of men, without examining, with the utmoſt attention, how far they are neceſſary to the public good.

Similar

Similar inquiries to this which is now under conſideration, have on former occaſions engaged the attention of the manufacturers; but from ſome unknown cauſes, they never were brought to any deciſive iſſue; and though the actual exiſtence of the practice of ſmuggling wool could never be doubted by thoſe perſons who were competent judges, yet no particular accounts have ever been exhibited to Parliament, on which might be grounded a *probable opinion* of the quantity exported.

I ſhall endeavour to ſupply this defect as far as is in my power; being determined, if poſſible, to preclude the neceſſity of future inquiries on the ſubject. Had I enjoyed more leiſure, I ſhould have gone to France myſelf, which in all probability would have enabled

enabled me to have obtained more complete information, but what has been effected will at leaſt lay a foundation for procuring a more accurate account of the quantity exported.

I hope it will be evident, by the tenor of all the arguments advanced in this publication, that I do not attempt to juſtify a prohibition of exporting wool, on any other ground than that of national advantage; and no manufacturer, who has a proper view of the ſubject, will be deſirous (or in fact has any reaſon in point of intereſt) of vindicating it on any other principle.

Though the manufacturers may derive ſuperior profit by the low price of wool, for a limited time, yet ſuch is the competition in

this buſineſs, that ſuch an advantage cannot be of long duration. Whether the price of wool be advanced or not, provided any conſiderable fluctuation in its value can be prevented, the profit of the manufacturers will not be affected. Every perſon acquainted with the woollen buſineſs muſt know, that the general average of profit is ſo moderate as not to bear a diminution; and it is impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe in ſuch an extenſive manufacture; the conſumers of woollens will therefore alone be affected by a permanent riſe in the price of wool.

It is futile to talk of the manufacturers combining together for the purpoſe of lowering the price of wool; there are too many oppoſite intereſts among them, for this ever to be effected, were they to attempt it. It is very

very true that, on the general principle of trade, they will endeavour to purchaſe the commodity at as cheap a rate as poſſible; and on the ſame principle, the wool-growers will be deſirous of obtaining as good a price as can be procured; but cauſes, very different from combinations on either ſide, will fix the average price of the article.

In conſequence of my ſituation, I have been held forth to public view, as a perſon who, by the aſſiſtance of his fellow manufacturers, is endeavouring to forge chains for binding the land-owners and wool-growers, and as a promoter of regulations, which "a Turkiſh baſha would be aſhamed of."

Warm and animated language, unreſtrained by the ſober dictates of Truth, and circula-

tated with the greateſt induſtry, by thoſe mediums of conveyance ſo common in this country, muſt in ſome meaſure affect the public opinion; and though it evinces but little magnanimity of mind to be affected by every idle cavil, that may be advanced againſt a perſon engaged in a public meaſure, yet I cannot be wholy inſenſible to thoſe repeated efforts, which our opponents are making, in order to render myſelf, and thoſe perſons with whom I am concerned, obnoxious to the land-owners and wool-growers.

I really believe it would be difficult to find any ſet of men leſs influenced by private views, than thoſe perſons who compoſe the General Meeting in London; and I am confident that the propoſals which will be ſubmitted to their conſideration, for altering

ſome

ſome parts of the intended bill, which may be deemed too ſevere, will be cheerfully adopted.

For my own part, I can recollect no period of my life when the *Amor Patriæ* did not glow in my breaſt; and though I was not deſtined to ſerve my country in the line which my early youth moſt approved, yet the ſame ſpirit which (had it not been checked by a mother's fears) would have led me to the profeſſion of arms, has conſtantly actuated my conduct; and I am confident that my mind is ſuperior to the contracted views of private intereſt, when that intereſt appears to be in oppoſition to the public good.

Your Lordſhip and the public will, I hope, excuſe this perſonal application, which

proceeds from a ſenſibility of ſoul, that cannot bear to be conſidered as an enemy to my country.

Had the intended bill been produced earlier in the ſeſſion, it might poſſibly have prevented ſome embarraſſment to ſeveral members of the Houſe of Commons, who though they have declared themſelves friendly to the meaſure, may be unwilling to act contrary to the ſentiments contained in the reſolutions of different meetings, held in the counties or towns repreſented by them.

Several unforeſeen circumſtances occurred to prevent the application to Parliament being made at the beginning of the ſeſſion; and one principal reaſon of delaying it, has beenowing to the ſtate of my health, which

vented

prevented me from attending in London. Thoſe gentlemen who are diſpoſed to ſerve the manufacturers, and who were particularly conſulted, will, I hope, admit this apology; as it is my earneſt deſire to finiſh the buſineſs with all poſſible diſpatch.

In order to ſhew, that even thoſe perſons, who have contended for a limited exportation of wool, have yet admitted the neceſſity of enacting ſevere laws againſt the ſmuggling of this article, I ſhall ſubjoin the plan exhibited by Mr. *Smith*, which may be ſeen in his Hiſtory of Wool. This extract may ſerve to exonerate the manufacturers from the charge of any improper ſeverity in framing the different clauſes in the propoſed bill. But indeed this concern has now ſo much engaged the attention of the publick, that it cannot fail

of

of being minutely diſcuſſed in Parliament, when it will appear how far the manufacturers are liable to the imputation of ſuch a charge.

I intended to have made a few curſory obſervations on the Commercial Treaty, as it may affect the woollen manufacture of this country, having ſeen nothing on the ſubject that has given me any ſatisfaction. That ſuch a publication as the '*Woollen-Draper's Letter*' ſhould paſs through two editions, can only be accounted for from the general deſire of ſeeing what could be ſaid by a perſon adopting ſuch an appellation; but this writer betrays almoſt a total ignorance in many points reſpecting the woollen buſineſs, and which a real woollen-draper, diſpoſed to converſe with clothiers, could ſcarcely be miſtaken in.

The

The Monthly Reviewers have mentioned this performance in terms of approbation; but though they may be excuſed for not being able to point out his miſrepreſentations, which thoſe perſons who are acquainted with the buſineſs of the clothier can alone do; yet certainly they are in every reſpect competent to detect a weak and fallacious mode of reaſoning. The only argument which this writer has advanced, (for every thing elſe is mere declamation) reſpecting the ſuperior advantage of the French over the Engliſh manufacturer, is in the compariſon he makes between the general taxes of France, and thoſe of England, as contraſted with the number of people in each. But allowing M. *Neckar*'s ſtatement to be accurate, on which this writer's poſition is founded, and that it may be poſſible to calculate, with ſome degree

of

of accuracy, the population of each country; yet will any perſon pretend that it is poſſible, from the ſingle circumſtance of an Engliſh manufacturer paying more taxes than a French manufacturer, to aſcertain whether a piece of cloth can be made cheaper in France than in England? Surely ſuch inconcluſive reaſoning as this will never be deemed ſatisfactory by any perſon who wiſhes to form an impartial opinion on the ſubject.

In my opinion, arguments of a different kind (except what may be deemed general ones) from thoſe which have come under my inſpection, muſt be uſed, in order to prove how far the commercial treaty may be either beneficial or prejudicial to the woollen manufacture of this kingdom; but it requires a competent knowledge of the various kinds

of

of woollen goods made in each kingdom, for any perſon to decide with tolerable accuracy on this point.

It appears to me, that the manufacturers of both kingdoms will derive advantage from an inſpection of the fabricks, made in each country; and, as far as my own experience goes, a rivalſhip can never injure a manufacturer, except ſome peculiar circumſtances ſhould give his rival a decided ſuperiority over him.

Though every real lover of his country muſt be deſirous of ſecuring thoſe advantages which Providence has beſtowed on us, yet the philoſophic mind cannot but view with pleaſure two great and powerful nations, that have for a ſeries of years exerted their utmoſt

utmoſt endeavours to deſtroy each other, now uniting, with apparent cordiality, in promoting thoſe meaſures which have a natural tendency to preſerve the bleſſings of peace.

I muſt, however, drop any further conſideration of this ſubject, having neither time nor ability of doing juſtice to it; and tho', in its remote conſequences, it may have an influence on the immediate object of my inquiry, yet I muſt acknowledge it does not come under my direct notice.

I have now, my Lord, brought my ſubject to a concluſion; and I have only to requeſt your Lordſhip's indulgence to thoſe faults that may be diſcerned in this performance.

A writer

A writer who chuſes to ſubmit his thoughts to public notice, has no right to plead want of leiſure, in extenuation of delivering crude and undigeſted notions, or for uſing weak and fallacious arguments; but there are circumſtances which may be urged in a writer's favour for faults in point of ſtile and compoſition.

Having the care of a manufactory of no inconſiderable extent, and being alſo engaged in other concerns, it cannot be expected that I ſhould find much time for writing.

The leiſure moments that I have enjoyed while at Bath, (for the benefit of my health) have been employed partly in drawing up theſe obſervations; but I have been continually hindered by attention to other things

of

of importance; and from the neceſſity I was under of often returning home, in order to inſpect my own buſineſs: I ſhall therefore, I preſume, be permitted to appeal to your Lordſhip and to the public on this ground, without the leaſt appearance of affectation.

It has been my endeavour to arrange my materials with ſome kind of order, to avoid weak and inconcluſive arguments, and to expreſs my thoughts with perſpicuity; but any further attention to compoſition than this, has been deemed by me unneceſſary; and, indeed, my time would not admit of it.

If my readers are enabled to underſtand the ſubject, ſo far as to be capable of perceiving wherein the ſtreſs of the argument lies between the promoters of the bill, and its opponents,

opponents, my end in writing will be anſwered.

Through the whole progreſs of this concern, I have avoided any application for ſupport, but as founded in the rectitude of the meaſure; and I ſhall not therefore now attempt to make converts of my readers, by embelliſhing my page with a pompous diſplay of the advantages derived to this kingdom by the woollen manufacture.

Permit me, my Lord, to acknowledge the juſt regard I entertain for thoſe marks of attention which I have received from your Lordſhip, and which are eſteemed by me, not ſo much on account of your high rank and ſtation, as for the ſolid advantages which I derive from perſonal converſe with you.

I have

I have alſo to thank you, my Lord, for permiſſion to addreſs myſelf to you publicly; and I now reſign this performance to the candour of your Lordſhip and of the public.

I am,

My Lord,

with ſincere regard,

Your Lordſhip's

obliged, and

moſt obedient ſervant,

JOHN ANSTIE.

Devizes, March 31ſt, 1787.

Mr. SMITH's

SCHEME

The illicit Exportation of Wool.

" NO wool to be carried coaſtwiſe, or on
" any river more than over a ferry in
" the common ferry-boats.

" A reward equal to 500 per cent. (inſtead
" of all other rewards) to be paid out of the
" public revenue for all wool, yarn, and
" woollen goods, in a contraband trade ſeized
" at ſea, or unlawfully put on board any
" navigable veſſel whatſoever. The public to
" avail itſelf out of the goods and chattles,
" and other confiſcables of the offender or of-
" fenders, in the firſt place; and farther to be

" entitled to one moiety of the forfeitures in " ſuch caſe incurred by laws now in being; " the other moiety of the ſame to be to the " crown. The captain, maſter, or chief " mariner, having direction of ſuch ſhip or " navigable veſſel, for the time being, with " as many others of the crew as may be ſup- " poſed privy to the lading thereof, (without " diſcovering the ſame) to be always deemed " as accomplices; and in caſe of non-payment " of the whole penalty of the 500 per cent. " to ſuffer death as felons. And (for pre- " venting colluſion) in caſe of any ſeizure, " and that ſuch accountable captain, maſter, " or mariners, or ſome of them at leaſt, are " not apprehended and committed to ſome " one of the King's priſons; in that caſe the " perſon or perſons ſo ſeizing, to be intitled " only to a moiety of the wool, &c. ſeized."

In

In anſwer to thoſe perſons who might object that his plan would not abſolutely prevent the ſmuggling of wool, he further adds,

" That 500 per cent. reward to the ſeizer, " at the expence of the tranſgreſſor, or with " the forfeiture of his life, (the one or other " not to be eluded) would be ſuch a terror " and diſcouragement as would certainly " quaſh all attempts of that kind. And if " this capital puniſhment be thought too " ſevere, in this caſe particularly I only refer " to the known allowed maxims, *Salus Rei-* " *publicæ ſuprema lex eſt*; *volenti non fit in-* " *juria*; and deſire them to compare this " clauſe with that ſtatute, and the reaſon of " it, which makes it death to have coining " inſtruments found upon any perſon, &c."

I wiſh it to be obſerved, that I do not mean to charge Mr. *Smith* with not having noticed the difference between Clothing and Combing wool; but that in all caſes they are not diſtinguiſhed by him with a ſufficient degree of accuracy, which is particularly the caſe when he compares the price of Engliſh wools with thoſe of other countries.

Though combing wool has not advanced in price equal with clothing wool, yet it is now (according to the accounts I have received) at much the ſame price it was before the laſt war, and the holders are in expectation of a further advance on it.

POST-

PATENT OFFICE LIBRARY

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE my letter was ſent to the preſs, I have ſeen the 38th number of the Annals of Agriculture: though, for the reaſons before aſſigned, I conſidered myſelf under no obligation to notice the objections of Mr. *Young*, yet I ſhould deem myſelf unworthy of public confidence, were I to neglect vindicating my character againſt a charge of having aſſerted a falſehood.

When I ſent my Card to the preſs, which was written at Bath, I really had no idea that any alteration whatever had been made in the clauſes reſpecting inſurance. It was ſo ſtrongly impreſſed on my mind, that the clauſes were left juſt as they ſtand in the preſent act, that I never thought of ſending

for our propoſed bill in order to examine into the matter. On this account, I ſcrupled not to aſſert, " that the clauſe (clauſes it ſhould have been ſaid) ſtood exactly as it does in the preſent bill."

Thoſe clauſes were abſolutely agreed in the Committee to remain juſt as they are in the laws now in force, and ſo in fact they ſtand at preſent, as to their real meaning and intention; but as all the acts relative to reſtrictions on wool, as they reſpect *Ireland*, will (if the propoſed bill paſs into a law) be diſcharged from the ſtatutes, (that kingdom not being now bound by our laws) it was neceſſary for the Secretary to draw the clauſes without noticing that kingdom, it being particularly mentioned in the act of 12 Geo. II. in which thoſe clauſes are contained.

Thoſe

Thoſe gentlemen who are poſſeſſed of the propoſed bill, as printed by my direction, with references to the preſent laws, and diſtinguiſhing the alterations by particular marks againſt the clauſes, will be able to judge for themſelves how far Mr. *Y.* has juſtified himſelf againſt the charge, in uſing the following language: " Thus in the clauſe of inſurances, " in which the law at preſent is nearer than " in any other caſe to the new propoſition, " there are no leſs than ſix alterations from " the act of 12 Geo. II. beſides others that " are verbal only. What therefore are we to " ſay to the Wiltſhire Woolman, who puſhed " himſelf forward to tell us, that *this clauſe* " *ſtands in the intended bill exactly as it does in* " *the preſent laws*; and this in the ſame page " as he falſely accuſes me of inaccuracy of " repreſentation and patient inveſtigation?"

I muſt

I muſt indeed plead guilty to the charge, ſo far as to acknowledge that I did not note the variation pointed out above; but I believe no candid perſon will ever accuſe me of aſſerting a falſehood on this account, as I defy my opponent, or any other perſon, to prove that the real deſign or intention of the clauſes is in the leaſt altered from the original.

The Secretary, by retaining, in one inſtance, the particular words of an exiſting clauſe, though he has judiciouſly omitted naming *Ireland*, has left that part open to the attack of the perſon who has publiſhed "Obſervations "on the Bill;" from which performance Mr. *Young* has given large quotations in his 38th number. Had it been deemed prudent to make any alteration in the original bill, as delivered to the Houſe of Commons, this, as well

well as ſome other trivial errors, would have been rectified in the new publication, which is in the hands of ſeveral perſons.

Mr. *Young* has endeavoured further to deſtroy the effect of the charge exhibited againſt him, by the following paſſage: " But " again, I obſerve, that this retort is not at " all requiſite to my general argument, which " went ſo largely to the ſyſtem of reſtriction, " that had the clauſe of inſurance ſtood " word for word as before, my attack upon " it was equally juſt and proper." Waving any obſervation on the inaccuracy with which he has expreſſed himſelf, which might be owing to haſte in writing, it ſtill remains with him to prove that the clauſe in queſtion will deſtroy " the immenſe and ſalutary traf- " fick of inſurance;" which is what, he had ſtated

ſtated in his firſt number, would be the conſequence of it. Till he is able to prove this aſſertion, the inference which I drew from his argument will continue valid.——Whether his general attack on the bill (which I ſuppoſe is the meaning intended to be conveyed in the above recited paſſage) was equally *juſt and proper*, an impartial public muſt determine.

I beg it may be obſerved, that Mr. *Young* retains and enforces the charge which he originally exhibited againſt the promoters of the bill, *of deſigning to injure the Yorkſhire manufacture*; as he has inſerted the following paſſage in a note:—"It is however worthy "of remark, that one aim of this bill is le-"velled againſt that fabrick, [viz. that of "Yorkſhire, which is mentioned in the pre-"ceding part of the note] as if the mono-

"poliſts

" poliſts were jealous of a progreſs which is a " real reproach to them."

What can this writer ſay in his juſtification, for bringing ſuch a charge againſt the framers of the bill, (or the *monopoliſts*, as he is pleaſed to call them) when I inform the public, that I have received a letter from the Chairman of the General Meeting in Yorkſhire, propoſing ſome alterations in the bill, principally in thoſe clauſes which relate to bonds and exemptions in favour of manufacturers, (which clauſes I am convinced muſt be altered;) but not a ſingle one in thoſe which relate to the coaſt regulations for ſhipping wool.

I will not copy this writer's example, by making uſe of opprobrious language; (and

Indeed

indeed I am ſorry that in one ſingle inſtance I retorted his own expreſſions, however juſtly they were applied by me;) but ſhall leave the public to paſs an impartial ſentence on our reſpective merits in point of fidelity.

It is neceſſary for me to obſerve, that I have never publiſhed any remarks on Mr. *Young*'s conduct, but what are contained in the Card inſerted in the public papers, and alſo in this pamphlet.——Were I not anxious to ſend this addition to the preſs, I ſhould notice other charges brought by him againſt the manufacturers, particularly what reſpects *Ireland*.—— He aſſerts, that the preſent ſituation of that kingdom is owing more to the deſigns of Woolmen, (as he calls the manufacturers) than to any other cauſe. As well might he attribute it principally to the land-owners,

who

who certainly propoſed the act of Charles II. which prohibited the Iriſh from ſending live cattle into this kingdom, and which was complained of at that time as a moſt grievous act.——Suppoſe the manufacturers in paſt times had contracted ideas relative to trade, it may with propriety be aſked, were no other bodies of men then infected with the ſame narrow views?

Have the woollen manufacturers manifeſted no liberality of ſentiment, by not oppoſing the repeal of thoſe laws which prohibited Ireland from exporting her own woollen manufactures to foreign countries? Or was their general conduct, when the Iriſh propoſitions were under conſideration, dictated by narrow and partial views? Mr. *Young* may poſſibly plead his being ignorant of the reſolutions

reſolutions which were paſſed by a conſiderable part of the manufacturers at that time. Let him however read the examination of the gentlemen from Birmingham, Mancheſter, and Hetruria, (the manufacturers of which places he has contraſted with the woollen manufacturers) before the Houſe of Lords and Commons, and compare it with the examinations of different perſons concerned in the woollen manufacture, before the privy council; and then, *on his own principles*, let him conſider with what juſtice he has made the *invidious compariſon*. Without pretending to arraign the opinions of other manufacturers, I am happy to obſerve, that the principles which it was my object to inculcate, when thoſe propoſitions were under conſideration, have now received almoſt general ſanction.

Perhaps

Perhaps the tranſaction to which the author alludes, if minutely inveſtigated, may be found to have originated in the private views of a few powerful individuals, rather than in the prejudices of the manufacturers in general; though theſe prejudices might be encouraged and drawn forth by artful and deſigning men.

To expect men in general to be free from any particular attachment to their own concerns, is abſurd in itſelf; and indeed were manufacturers, or any other body of men, inattentive to what concerned their united and particular intereſt, the moſt fatal conſequences might, from ſuch inattention, deſcend to the community at large.——That perſon only deſerves to be conſidered as poſſeſſing a truly liberal mind, who, ſenſible

ble of the neceſſity of an attachment to partial intereſts, endeavours, by the ſuperior powers of his mind, to remove thoſe improper prejudices which are naturally contracted by too great an attention to this principle.—— He will endeavour to effect this ſalutary purpoſe, by examining the ſubject on which he chuſes to exerciſe his thoughts, with the greateſt care and attention; and (having done this without partiality) by demonſtrating from well-eſtabliſhed facts and juſt reaſoning, that the indulgence of ſuch prejudices muſt be really detrimental, not only to thoſe perſons whoſe intereſt appears to be more immediately concerned, but alſo to the public at large.

Though Mr. *Smith* was a profeſſed advocate for a limited exportation of wool, yet he had a ſufficient

a ſufficient degree of candour to uſe the following language, when ſpeaking of the deſigns of the manufacturers:—" To this I rejoin, " that in the time of Cha. II. and ſince, a " right end has been propoſed, only the means " have been miſtaken." " Thoſe who meant " beſt to their country honeſtly propoſed, " that the profit of manufacturing the Eng- " liſh wool ſhould be to the people of this " kingdom, and not to foreigners."

In what a ſuperior point of view would Mr. *Young* have appeared, if, inſtead of deforming his page with indiſcriminate invective (for in vain does he attempt to ſcreen the Yorkſhire clothiers &c. from his general cenſures) againſt the woollen manufacturers, he had contented himſelf with urging his reaſons, with all the force of *ſound* argument he

might be capable of, againſt a meaſure which he deems impolitic and uſeleſs.

He may be aſſured, that, while I am honoured with the ſtation in which I have been placed, I ſhall eſteem it my duty to vindicate the conduct of the manufacturers; which, in the proſecution of this inquiry, has been manly and liberal; though, at the ſame time, my mind ſhall be preſerved unbiaſſed, and attentive to what ſhall appear of public benefit in the further progreſs of this important concern.

THAT my readers may form their own opinion of the temper and ſtile of Mr. *Young*'s compoſition, I have extracted a few paſſages from his laſt number, as I find that I was much miſtaken in ſuppoſing that the Annals of Agriculture were generally read.

It

It would be paying this writer too great a compliment, were I, in conſequence of his miſrepreſentations, to enter on a juſtification of thoſe clauſes in the bill which reſpect the wool-growers. That reſpectable body of men are intitled to too much regard from the legiſlature, to have any apprehenſions of "being bound in ſhackles of "iron by the manufacturers." Such turgid expreſſions as this writer makes uſe of will neither add force or energy to his arguments.

Extracts from the 38th Number of the Annals of Agriculture.

"And here let me aſk, what epithet is due to "men who could coolly and deliberately ſit down "to tranſcribe a ſyſtem of deſpotiſm, without one "atom of feeling for ſo numerous and reſpectable "a claſs of people, as the growers of wool— "who could heap puniſhment on reſtriction—add "fine to penalty—blacken miſdemeanour into "felony, and bind, with ſhackles of iron, a harmleſs ſet of men, in every ſtep and progreſs of "their

" their ordinary occupations? This is ſurely " cruel; perhaps, wantonly cruel."

" It is the private views of private intereſt—the " inordinate deſires of extravagant profit—the " arithmetic of the counter—the policy of the " ſhop. To buy wool cheap, will add ſo much " per cent. on the manufacturers' capital. Not " the profit of all the manufacturers of the king- " dom;—there would have been ſomething too " liberal in that idea;—but the local ones of the " Weſt: hence the reſtrictions laid on the dealer, " and the coaſting trade, levelled ſo pointedly at " the Yorkſhire fabricks."

" Let us then hear no more from woolmen of the " proſperity of land and manufactures being the " ſame. Birmingham and Sheffield, Mancheſter " and Hetruria, may talk that language—they " have no ſuch monopolies againſt the landed " intereſt—their ſucceſs is our proſperity."

FINIS.